

Questions from USARPAC Town Hall and Answers

1. How will furlough affect leave days, specifically if we have use or lose leave that we are not able to schedule/use due to furlough days, will there be a provision to have those days restored at the end of the leave year?

ANSWER: There is no such provision at this time. DCG indicated he would raise the issue to HQDA.

2. Non-foreign locality pay/COLA were previously reduced. What will happen to COLA if we are furloughed?

ANSWER: This was raised to HQDA for response.

3. How does a furlough day affect my COLA?

ANSWER: This was raised to HQDA for response.

4. If I am on grade retention due to previous Decrement, which expires on 24 Oct 2013, and there is no position change what will happen to my pay?

ANSWER: Although the grade retention will expire, your saved pay will not expire. The only affect from the furlough is that you will not be paid for the days you are furloughed.

Further, although we are in a hiring freeze there may still be some positions that are being filled. As an employee who was changed to lower grade due to the decrement you are matched against vacancies.

5. Is anything being done to mitigate the financial loss? Is ACS available?

ANSWER: USARPAC will not be able to mitigate an employee's financial loss.

There are resources available to assist you in reviewing your financial situation, including ACS and the Employee Assistance Program. You may also want to adjust some of your discretionary allotments/spending.

There is a listing of resources/links on the USARPAC Portal, under the SEQUESTRATION (<https://portal.usarpac.army.mil/pages/default.aspx>)



6. I was reduced in grade due to decrement. How long can I stay on the PPP list?

ANSWER: The PPP registration is good for 12 months and can be extended for another 12 months.

7. Is there a possibility that furloughed civilians will be allowed to use the commissary or exchange facilities?

ANSWER: No. The DCG indicated he would raise the issue to HQDA.

8. I work with Air Force Management Team at Wheeler AB, what are they doing and how will I be affected?

ANSWER: Each component will administer the furlough for their employees. Generally, all Army employees will be affected.

9. Is it okay to volunteer to work on furlough days?

ANSWER: NO. It is against the law. On a furlough day employees cannot volunteer at the office, respond to work issues from home, or respond to blackberry or e-mail messages.

10. Will maintenance contract(s) be shut down?

ANSWER: Currently the plan is that there will be shut downs of motor pools, helicopter flying hours and similar functions based on availability of funds.

11. Will there be future decrements?

ANSWER: At this time there is no decrement scheduled. However, if we go into sequestration, this is only the first year of a 10 year plan.

12. Will TDYs decrease?

ANSWER: The USARPAC Policy 13-01, issued 1 February 2013 provided guidance on TDYs. The USARP FY13 Budget Uncertainty Implementation Guidance Memorandum of 7 February 2013 provided implementation guidance and may be viewed on the G8 section of the USARPAC Portal.

13. What happens if my furlough day is while I am in a TDY status? Would I travel on Saturday or Sunday? Would I receive compensatory time for travel?

ANSWER: In reality - there should be NO TDYs. USARPAC guidance is to curtail temporary duties that are not mission-critical.

If an employee's travel status requires his/her stay to include a furlough day the agency must provide per diem or actual expenses to employees.

14. Will the military be working more due to the decreased civilian work hours?

ANSWER: Yes. Military may also be doing different work than normal due to reduced requirements in their current work area.

15. Some jobs are mission critical. What are exceptions to furlough?

ANSWER: At this time there has not been any decision on any exceptions. Current guidance from HQDA is that approval of exceptions to furlough is at that level and will be few. Any exception will be reviewed by DOD for consistency.

16. Can an employee be furloughed on a holiday? ...The day before and the day after?

ANSWER: The Comptroller General has determined that it is not appropriate to furlough an employee on a holiday, unless the furlough is for an extended number of continuous days (e.g. a furlough for 30 calendar days), and a holiday falls within that period. Note: employees must work either the day before or the day after the holiday in order to get paid for the holiday. .

17. Who makes the decision on whether the Army furloughs civilian employees?

ANSWER: It will be a DOD-wide decision – even if commands are within compliance on their budget.

18. What will trigger the furlough decision?

ANSWER: There is no decision yet. If the sequestration occurs (tentatively 1 March) then the budget cuts kick in immediately. At that time DOD/DA will determine whether to implement the furlough.

19. Since civilian pay is fenced and a legal obligation, how can the money be used elsewhere?

ANSWER: The overall budget is subject to cuts, which includes the funding for civilian pay. There are legal obligations that must be paid, including payment for hours worked. There are other costs that are not legal obligations (maintenance and readiness) so on or about 1 July we may need to park aircraft and shut down motor pools.

20. How can we get information?

ANSWER: The USARPAC Portal has a Sequestration starburst which links you to folders and information on Budget Uncertainty, FAQs, Furlough, Hiring Freeze, Link to OPM, Resources and Town Hall slides. It is being added to as information becomes available.



Information will also be posted in the Army newspaper, as appropriate.

21. What is furlough tied to; OCO funding, Sequestration or Continuing Resolution?

ANSWER: For FY13, sequestration would cause the administrative furlough.

22. If an extension of the Continuing Resolution is not passed on 27 March, what will happen?

ANSWER: If there is not extension of the Continuing Resolution or there is no FY13 budget passed then it would be necessary to implement a Shutdown (Emergency) Furlough which releases employees immediately unless they are in a position that has been identified for exemption.

If the Continuing Resolution is extended for short period, the can is only kicked down the road.

If the Continuing Resolutions is extended to the end of the fiscal year the DOD will be funded at the FY12 level.

23. What would be the effect on part-time employees? Would they be furloughed full days?

ANSWER: Furloughs of part-time or uncommon tour of duty employees must comply with same adverse action procedures. When scheduling furlough hours for part-time employees, managers should prorate their furlough hours in the same proportion as that for full-time employees working 80 hours bi-weekly. The scheduling of furlough time may be subject to bargaining.

EXAMPLE: A part-time employee with a work schedule of 20 hours a week (40 hours per bi-weekly pay period) work for one half the hours of a full time employee. If full time employees are furlough for 16 hours a pay period, a part-time employee would be furloughed for 8 hours a pay period.

24. How does the furlough affect my high-3 for retirement calculations?

ANSWER: The high-3 average salary used to compute CSRS and FERS annuities is the largest annual rate resulting from averaging an employee's *rates of basic pay* in effect over any period of 3 consecutive years of creditable civilian service, with each *rate* weighted by the length of time it was in effect. If a period of nonpay status (such as a furlough) that is creditable for retirement occurs during the 3-year period used to compute the high-3 average salary, the loss of actual pay during that nonpay status period generally would have no effect on the high-3 computation.

25. Does a furlough affect accrual of annual leave and sick leave?

ANSWER: Yes, it may.

If an employee is furloughed (i.e., placed in nonpay status) for part of a biweekly pay period, the employee's leave accrual will generally not be affected for that pay period.

However, the accumulation of nonpay status hours during a leave year can affect the accrual of annual leave and sick leave over a period of time. For example, when a full-time employee with an 80-hour biweekly tour of duty accumulates a total of 80 hours of nonpay status from the beginning of the leave year (either in one pay period, or over the course of several pay periods), the employee will not earn annual and sick leave in the pay period in which that 80-hour accumulation is reached. If the employee again accumulates 80 hours of nonpay status, he or she will again not earn leave in the pay period in which that new 80-hour total is reached. At the end of the leave year, any accumulation of nonpay status hours of less than 80 hours is zeroed out so that the accumulation of nonpay status hours for the next leave year starts at zero.

26. If I have compensatory time earned that will be paid out if not used how will that be handled?

ANSWER: The intent would be for individuals to use any compensatory time that is subject to payout in FY13. This is a leadership issue and would expect the resolution to be at the lowest level.

27. If there is an emergency and it is my furlough day, what will happen?

ANSWER: You should NOT be called in. The expectation is that there will be coverage on your furlough day.

28. What will by furlough dates? What are exceptions? Can I have Fridays off?

ANSWER: The intent is to maximize flexibilities at the lowest possible level and to tailor it to the specific work unit. We must meet our bargaining obligations as well.

29. What is affect of furlough for Reserve soldiers on military leave? Can their military pay be affected? Can reservists get paid?

ANSWER: Researching

30. Can I be furloughed on a military reserve day?

ANSWER: Researching

31. If an employee performs National Guard or Reserve duty while furloughed is it a dual compensation situation?

ANSWER: It is not a dual compensation situation because furloughed employees are not in a pay status. They will be compensated by the military and continue to be carried in an Absent-US status.

32. Is there flexibility in how I am furloughed? Can I do 4 hours a day, two days a week to meet my 8 hours a week?

ANSWER: At this time HQDA has not provided specific implementation guidance.

33. Will Alternate Work Schedule (AWS) be stopped for everyone?

ANSWER: No. A decision on whether AWS will be stopped may be subject to bargaining.

34. Will the military schedules change? Will there continue to be training holidays?

ANSWER: Military schedules will change but the specifics have not yet been determined. No decision has been made on DONSA's.

35. Will there be an extension of furlough beyond FY13?

ANSWER: At this time the furlough plan is for FY13 only.

36. What is happening with contractors?

ANSWER: USARPAC guidance is that commands will review all service contracts to ensure requirement are commensurate with scope and level of effort required to minimally meet mission critical requirements. Each contract is being reviewed to determine if it is necessary and whether it should be renewed.

37. What is happening with the foreign national workforce?

ANSWER: The foreign national workforce is exempt. This is driven by SOFA agreements and legal obligations.

